Hello, ladies and gentlemen. Today, we are going to take a look at the principles of constructivist teaching. And for today's lesson, I've chosen a quote by Albert Einstein which states, "It is not that I'm so smart, but I stay with the questions much longer."

Now, by the end of the lesson today, you will be able to discuss the importance of constructivism in the classroom. You'll be able to discuss Brooks and Brooks's ideas about the five main constructivist teaching principles. And you will be able to relate constructivism to competency-based education principles.

So first, let's go ahead and take a look at that constructivist theory. Constructivist theory really posits the idea that learning or the development of that knowledge, the ability for students to determine meaning, is really a result of what's called assimilation.

So that looks at the idea of when students and learners are connecting that new knowledge to the knowledge they already have as well as accommodation where learners are focusing on adjusting their views of the world to help make place for that new knowledge.

Now, when we talk about constructivist theory, we're really looking at the idea that learning consists of individual students really constructing meaning of what they're looking at. And there are many different facets related to constructivism within the classroom. So first and foremost, students must be actively engaged in learning in order to construct that meaning.

So when we look at the construction of meaning, what we're really focusing on is the idea that knowledge is developed from the learner's prior knowledge and that learning activities are there in which students can be engaged.

So when we look at that, what we're really looking at within a classroom context is that if you don't have that student engagement in what's going on, if a student isn't buying into what you're doing, rather they're on their phone, or they're talking with someone else, or they don't see how it's relevant to them, then it's very difficult for them to construct meaning from that.

So when I look at a media studies class, I would first maybe pre-empt it with asking the students what it is that they are most interested in connecting with when they look at various elements of mass media. Once they have that buy-in, and they're engaged, then we use that as a way to teach the various foundational elements of media studies.
The second idea is that students really develop that meta-cognition as they learn. So if we're looking at that, in other words, what we're saying is that they're not only learning the content, but students are also actively work to learn how they best learn.

So for example, in a class on reading, we're not only looking at reading the specific texts that we lay out for the group, but also working to help ensure that students are understanding what kind of reader are you? What are elements within reading that you are particularly good at? And what are ways in which you could improve your reading, things to watch out for such as what are the types of books that are most interesting to you? Are you having difficulty in processing the vocabulary or retaining the content? Things like that.

The third area is that the idea that constructing meaning really occurs within the mind while engaging in learning opportunities. So the mental part of constructing meaning-- this is what Dewey often refers to as that reflective activity-- really allows students to make meaning and make that learning their own.

So while a student is engaged in let's say a discussion within English 9, if they are engaging with the material in To Kill a Mockingbird, and they are drawing the connections between the children's actions within the text and the connection to the time period, they are then making that learning themselves. They are constructing that learning and really embodying it themselves.

Number four, that learning is social. Learning requires the use of language. This really helps to move us within the classroom away from the teacher up and lecturing the whole time to that interaction continually back and forth with the students.

We also learn in context, meaning that we can not construct meaning from those facts in isolation. This is why elements of constructivist teaching really work best when you're able to bridge certain subject areas as well so that students can see that connection across the contents.

And the why of learning is really important. Students need to understand why what they're learning is relevant if they are really going to learn. This also works as a wonderful motivational tool. So for example, in a class like English where a lot of times, some students, especially those who don't want to go into it, say, why do I need to know this? There's no point. Helping to get them to understand the why of that learning and how they can use that beyond in their college or career really helps them to focus in.

So what I want to look at now are the five principles of constructivist teaching specifically as they're
identified by Brooks and Brooks. In 1992, they really worked to create the five principles of constructivist teaching. And we're going to look at their correlation to competency-based education principles that were promoted by iNacol and the competency works.

So looking within these facets of constructivist theory, we are going to see that the first principle of constructivist teaching is that teachers should pose problems of emerging relevance.

Using constructivism, teachers then are able to really relate to the competency-based education principle, that various competencies are really going to focus in on those higher-level cognitive processes, that students are continuing to engage at a deeper and deeper level with the learning that they are doing, that they are looking at the creation and application of that knowledge and really focusing not just on the knowledge and the skills but also developing that mindset so that they are ready for future learning in the college or in their careers.

The second principle is that using constructivism, teachers should really structure learning around those big ideas. This directly relates to CBE's principle of creating those essential questions and the idea that the learning targets are not only clear and measurable, but also they can be generalized to be seen throughout other context areas to really empower students and then focus that learning in many different areas.

The third principle is that teachers should seek and value students' points of views. As we've talked before, learning cannot exist just by facts alone. It is social and it is in context. And so encouraging students to really hone in on some of those education principles promoted by iNacol and competency works, giving students a voice and a choice in what they're learning, that can really help to empower students in their learning.

The fourth principle is that teachers should adapt their instruction really to address those student needs both based on their prior learning, as well as helping to avoid any of the misconceptions based on the students that walk in your door. This directly relates to competency-based education's principles and ideas around the idea that students are really receiving that differentiated support when they need it so that they can move on and make the most out of their learning.

And finally, it's that teachers should really assess learning in the context of teaching. What this means is that teachers are using formative assessments so that students are able to see what it is that they are getting and what they need to go back. This really helps make the learning process meaningful for students. It makes it a positive experience so that they can take ownership over their own learning.
Now that we've reached the end of the lesson, you have been able to discuss the importance of constructivism in the classroom. You can now discuss Brooks and Brooks's ideas about the five main constructivist teaching principles. And you can relate constructivism to competency-based education principles.

Now that we've finished, I'd like you to think just a little bit what do you think are the greatest benefits to the five principles of constructivist teaching? Now it's your turn to apply what you've learned in the video. The additional resources section will be super helpful to you as this section is designed to help you discover the useful ways to apply what you've learned here. Each link includes a brief description so that you can easily target the resources that you want.